



# TOWN OF HUDSON

## Budget Committee



Ted Trost, Chairman

Normand Martin, Vice-Chairman

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## Meeting Minutes November 16, 2017

### A. Call to Order

Chairman Ted Trost called the meeting to order in the Buxton Meeting Room at 7:02 pm, and declared that a quorum was present.

### B. Pledge of Allegiance

Lori Robicheau-Pagan led the Pledge of Allegiance.

### C. Attendance

**Members Present:** Ted Trost, Norm Martin, Grace Hopkins, Jim Barnes, Lori Robicheau-Pagan, Andrew Levin (arrived approximately 7:06), and Board of Selectmen Alternate Representative Dave Morin (Selectmen Ted Luszey member of audience for this meeting.)

**Members Absent:** Shawn Murray (excused), Joe Fernald (excused), Bob Guessferd (excused), Malcolm Price (excused)

### D. Public Input

**None**

### E. Committee Report: **Not requested**

### F. Meeting Minutes

Motion to accept the November 1, 2017 meeting minutes made by Lori Robicheau-Pagan, seconded by Norm Martin.

Mr. Martin asked the attendance portion of the minutes be amended to eliminate a duplicate listing of himself.

Also amend the minutes to note the Board of Selectmen plans to meet November 2<sup>nd</sup>, not the 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Motion to accept the minutes, with amendments, carries 7-0-0.

## **G. Old Business**

Mr. Trost provided an update on previous discussion regarding the location of the school deliberative session. A large audience is expected due to the school warrant articles. Mr. Trost was informed that the Budget Committee does not determine the location or the time of the school board session.

Q – Mr. Barnes. Does the school board know about this concern?

A – Ms. Kathy Carpentier. The Business Administrator was informed about the discussion today by Ms. Carpentier.

Amending the bylaws was deferred to the next meeting.

## **H. New Business**

Mr. Morin. The Board of Selectmen asked all departments heads to plan a zero increase, which they did. In addition to budget, additional needed items were requested outside the budget.

Mr. Malizia. The operating budget is \$5.50 per thousand, which is a 22 cent decrease over this year. The warrant articles add 8 cents per thousand.

Mr. Malizia. Because Hudson is an SB2 town, General, Water and Sewer must each have a default budget. The default budget has been calculated. If the operating budgets do not pass, the default budget will be used, which will cause a \$288,000 shortage. Water and Sewer are separate and do not have a rate increase.

Ms. Carpentier: Tuesday night the Board of Selectmen forwarded two more warrant articles: Warrant Article S for Town Clerk/Tax Collector Salary Scale and Warrant Article T for Benson Park Restroom Facilities.

Q - Mr. Trost. Why the general budget explicitly lists the Library and Conservation Fund, but no other groups.

A - Mr. Malizia: The library has a separate Board of Trustees and do not raise their own revenue. The Conservation Fund comes from the General Fund and has its own Commission.

Mr. Malizia. Revenue is good. Will be using 600K surplus to reduce taxes.

Q – Mr. Barnes. What are the contracted services with Litchfield.

A – Mr. Malizia. Long term agreement for dispatch and EMS services.

Q – Mr. Barnes. What are Net Revenues.

A – Mr. Malizia. Cost of ambulance billing service. Used to be 10%, now 5%.

Mr. Levin. 10% is a lot.

Mr. Malizia. It used to be 10%, but is not any more.

Ms. Carpentier. The billing part is not expensive, but collections are expensive. The net includes writeoffs.

### **Warrant Article Straw Vote**

Mr. Trost. The vote is non-binding and is intended to indicate what is working and what is not, as well as giving an idea of where the committee stands on the articles. The final vote will be on the ballot. Not planning to vote on the last two articles.

See end of minutes for detailed table. Summary of Warrant Articles:

A. General Fund Operating Budget (includes Library and Conservation): 6-0-1

B. Sewer Fund Operating Budget: 6-0-1

C. Water Fund Operating Budget: 6-0-1

D. Wage and Benefit Increase for Town Clerk/Tax Collector: 5-2-0

G. Lowell Road CMAQ Project: 6-1-0

H. Hire Four (4) Firefighter/AEMT's: 6-0-1

I. Funding for Fire Apparatus Refurb and Repair Capital Reserve Fund: 7-0-0

J. Funding for Property Revaluation Capital Reserve Fund: 6-0-1

K. Funding for Communications Equip and Infrastructure Capital Res Fund: 7-0-0

L. Hire Associate IT Specialist: 3-2-1

M. Establish Municipal and Transportation Improvement Capital Res Fund: 4-3-0

Q. Wage and Benefit Increase for Library Personnel: 2-3-2

R. Funding for Library Improvement Capital Reserve Fund: 4-3-0

### **Warrant Article T, Benson Park Restroom**

(Printed information provided at start of meeting regarding building a permanent restroom facility at Benson Park, Warrant Article T.)

Mr. Barnes presented information on Warrant Article T. For the last eight years there have been portable toilets at Benson Park. The proposal is for a permanent restroom at Benson Park in place of the existing portable toilets, especially due to large events that overwhelm the portable toilets. The Benson Park Committee considered whether to renovate existing structures or build a new one. For existing, the kitchen area and the train station were not feasible due to historic restrictions and Americans with Disability Act (ADA) requirements. The restrictions on new construction were

prohibitive. The best location was determined to be the storage area at the rear of the gorilla house. The gorilla house does not have historic restrictions. The committee has estimates (NOT quotes), for \$100,000 for construction, \$100,000 for sewer and electric, \$17,000 for one year of facility operation, plus contingencies for a total of \$240,000. The major expense for operations is the cleaning.

Q – Mr. Levin. Did the committee consider private septic rather than sewer?

A – Mr. Barnes. Would need to excavate a large area due to the number of people using the facility; not sure it would be a saving. The public sewer is about 150 yards away from the Gorilla house.

Mr. Trost. Concern that the frequency of planned cleanings was not enough, especially once a day on weekends.

Q – Mr. Trost. What is the expected usage? Is there a count of the number of visitors?

A – Mr. Barnes. Estimates based on 500 people per day.

A – Mr. Morin. Difficult to determine. Could put a car counter across the entrance, but unknown number of people per car. By the time the committee decided the count was needed, it was the end of the park season.

Mr. Trost. Any count would therefore be after the town voting.

Q – Ms. Hopkins asked how many stalls there would be.

A – Mr. Barnes referred to the handout provided at the beginning of the meeting. There would be 4 stalls each for men and women.

Mr. Martin. Not accurate count based on vehicle counting because don't know how many people per car.

Mr. Martin. It is a lot of money for a large bathroom that is supposed to be passive recreation. He referred to a Hollis park that is comparable to Bensons and does not have a public restroom.

Ms. Robicheau-Pagan. Drives by the park frequently and the parking lot is full every day on weekends.

Mr. Morin. The Hollis park is wooded. The Fire Captain has been checking the portable toilets on weekends for overflow.

Mr. Trost. The money spent for the permanent bathrooms would benefit people from out of town. The issue of out-of-town use has not been resolved.

Mr. Barnes. Someone has to come up with a proposal to collect fees. The cost to staff someone to collect the fees exceeds the amount collected unless there is a major attraction at the park, such as a beach or a campground.

Ms. Robicheau-Pagan. \$240,000 was a lot and asked if alternative plans had considered, such as increasing the number of portable toilets or adding more services to maintain the facilities.

Q - Mr. Morin. What is the breakdown of the \$240,000?

A - Mr. Barnes. Repeated the 100,000 for construction, 100,000 for sewer/electric, 17,000 for one year of maintenance and the rest is contingency.

Mr. Morin. Car counting would give an average. Fire/police info??? How much for 10K portable toilet now?

Ms. Carpentier. The road agent changed the vendor and the cleaning schedule. The overwhelmed portable toilet problem may not still be there. Voters did not pass a user fee on the last ballot (strong NO).

Straw Vote on Warrant Article T: 2-4-1

### **Warrant Article S**

(Printed information was provided at the start of the meeting regarding a step scale for the Town Clerk/Tax Collector, Warrant Article S.)

Mr. Morin. Page 4. Salary differences with towns compared to Hudson. The step scale makes raises easier. Current problem with replacement Town Clerk/Tax Collector starting at same salary as outgoing person, regardless of experience.

Mr. Trost. Eliminate the need to go to the voters every year.

Q - Mr. Martin. Do the reference cities have elected an elected Town Clerk/Tax Collector?

A - Mr. Malizia. Yes. Some cities in NH have separate town clerk and tax collector positions. The cities in the comparison were intentionally chosen because they have

a combined position in order to make a better comparison.

Q - Mr. Martin. How did it get started that Hudson pays a salary with benefits for the town clerk, which is an elected position, but other elected positions do not get a salary with benefits. What is the difference? Why don't selectmen get benefits?

A - Mr. Trost. The clerk is full-time and other elected positions are part-time. In addition, the clerk manages a sizable staff.

Mr. Malizia: The law allows for this payment arrangement. This decision was made in the 80s. Part-time typically do not get benefits. The intent of the scale is to fix the issue with a brand new person being paid the same as an experienced person.

Mr. Martin. OK with the idea of the scale.

Mr. Luszey. The tax collector/town clerk is a two-function position. At a future time, the Board of Selectmen could split the position into two positions. The warrant article is intended to solve a problem with a new person starting in the tax collector/town clerk position at the same salary scale as the exiting clerk, regardless of level of experience.

Mr. Trost. Clever forward-looking solution to more than one problem.

Mr. Morin. Prior deliberative sessions had concerns about a new person coming in at same rate as the departing person.

Straw Vote on Warrant Article S: 7-0-0

### **Warrant Article Wrap-up**

Q - Mr. Morin. What information can selectmen get to help with NO votes?

A - Mr. Martin. More information on the portable toilet vendor change.

A - Mr. Trost. Possibility of moving the Library IT position to the Town IT department. Possibly this would eliminate the need for Warrant Article L.

### **Highway**

Mr. Jess Forrence representing the Highway Department due to Kevin Burns being out of town.

Q - Mr. Morin. More information on the portable toilet situation.

A - Mr. Forrence. Deferred to Kevin Burns.

Q - Mr. Barnes. 5552-248, Street Overlay Paving. How many miles of paving does

that item cover?

A – Mr. Forrence. This year approximately three miles were paved.

Q – Mr. Trost. What is the total number of miles of road?

A – Mr. Malizia. Approximately 200 miles.

Q - Mr. Martin. Item 5551, Admin, why a 9.5% increase? Is that salary or benefits?

A - Ms. Carpentier. Insurance benefits; someone who had opted out has opted back in.

Q - Mr. Barnes. 5554-403. Small Equipment. Departments sharing a truck ... street, sewer and drains.

Q – Mr. Barnes. What is the new Parks Division?

A - Mr. Forrence. A Parks Division was created by selectmen to get a better idea of the cost of the parks, and includes all parks, not just Bensons.

Ms. Carpentier. Highway is moving an existing person to Parks and the person will not be doing only Parks (plowing in the winter, for example).

Q - Mr. Martin. Transfer one position from 5552 to 5565. Shouldn't transfer show as a negative?

A – Ms. Carpentier. Raises and other increases cancel out the transfer. 100% increase in 5556 cost center.

### **Solid Waste**

Ms. Carpentier. 2% increase 1.5 M for trash / recycling, this is a big ticket item.

### **Benson Park**

Section 5063, page 23. Volunteer activities. No change from last year.

Ms. Carpentier. Page 25, Operations changes. 1) Highway overtime is up due to a step increase. 2) Electricity increase due to overspending the previous year 3) Portable toilets increased \$9,000 to \$10,000.

Mr. Trost. No permanent toilet facility in the next fiscal year.

Q - Mr. Martin. Line 202. Small equipment maintenance (mowers). Does the Benson Park Committee have their own mowers?

A - Mr. Barnes. Highway department uses their own for Benson Park maintenance; the mowers listed here are for volunteer use.

Q - Mr. Trost. Park Maintenance, "office building" repairs – what does that mean.

A – Mr. Barnes. Structural repairs such as the sill / beams work that is being done this year.

Mr. Trost. Means work done on the building called the Office, not office type work.

### **Utility - Sewer**

Mr. Elvis Dhima. Operations funding for sewer comes from users. Treatment is in Nashua. The Highway Department handles town maintenance. Next plans are to purchase a new camera for inspections and the Melendy road system fix.

Q - Mr. Trost. Are the Windham Road Station improvements completed.

A - Mr. Malizia. Will be discussed later (that is Water, not Sewer).

### **Utility - Water**

Mr. Dhima. Two wells in Litchfield, buy water from Pennichuck in the summer. Pay for maintenance on the lines. Gordon Street, Sullivan switch beyond borders to limit pressure drop.

6500 Customers.

Q - Mr. Trost. Update on Windham Road Station?

A – Mr. Dhima. Updated pump station to improve fire capacity, added generator power, installed a software system for flow control.

Q - Mr. Trost. Is there a strategic plan / list of future projects?

A – Mr. Dhima. The four stations are mostly new and not anticipated to need work in the near future.

Q - Mr. Martin. Extension to Londonderry condos, who pays for that?

A – Mr. Dhima. Rates are only within Hudson, other towns usage is handled by Pennichuck.

Q - Mr. Martin. Salary and Benefits went from 39K to 80K.

A - Ms. Carpentier. Billings and collection water clerk part-time moved to full-time outside the budget cycle after BOS granted approval. This is funded by water users, so BOS can approve.

### **Land Use (Planning, Planning Board, Zoning, Zoning Board of Adjustment)**

Mr. Malizia. Used to be fire department, engineering. The health section remained in

the Fire Department (such as mosquito spraying).

Q - Mr. Martin. Unaware Hudson does mosquito spraying. What is done?

A - Mr. Malizia. Preventative spraying in strategic places, not the spraying from trucks throughout the town.

Q - Mr. Martin. Land Use Director. Why is there a telecomm cost? Why need to call at 3 AM?

A - Mr. Malizia. Another tool for the director.

### **Engineering**

Mr. Malizia. Engineering, Page 14. Mr. Dhima is the town engineer.

Q - Mr. Barnes. Outside engineering fees of 30K to 40K?

A - Mr. Dhima. For basic engineering resources if need help. There is a reduction due to eliminating a part-time civil engineer and an intern.

### **Conservation**

Item 5586. Presenter could not make it.

Mr. Dhima. Item 202, \$150 to \$2150.

Ms. Carpentier. Gas powered trimmer, chainsaw, safety equipment, etc.

### **Town Moderator**

Mr. Paul Inderbitzen. Due to cyclical nature of elections, 94% increase. There will be three elections. Next year talk about changing location. Printing increases.

Ms. Carpentier. Although 94% increase, only 10K -> 21K and is less than FY17.

Q - Mr. Barnes. Police detail decrease is not consistent with increase in number of elections.

A - Mr. Inderbitzen. Town elections do not need as much as national.

Q - Mr. Martin. Is the machine programming local?

A - Mr. Inderbitzen. Just the cards get sent out to be programmed, not the entire machine.

Mr. Inderbitzen. Small operations materials has included plan for yearly booth replacement. Company out of business, looking for a new company.

Q - Mr. Morin. Electronic registration testing on state level. Is this anything Hudson would do?

A - Mr. Inderbitzen. The check-in book would move to laptop, with a scanner. Dover tried this, no information on how it went. Secretary of State has to approve.

Q - Mr. Martin. Would electronic check-in prevent people from voting in multiple towns?

A - Mr. Inderbitzen. After election, checklist loaded into statewide database. It would not be in real time. Multiple voting would be caught when the data was loaded into the state system, as it is now.

## **I. Other Business/Comments Comments**

Q - Mr. Levin. Is the Budget Committee voting on the School warrant article done?

A - Mr. Trost. No, the voting will happen when the school budget is discussed.

Mr. Trost. The next meeting is Tuesday, November 21<sup>st</sup>.

## **J. Adjournment:**

Motion to adjourn the meeting of November 16, 2017. (Martin/Barnes). Motion Carries unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 8:32 PM.

Prepared by: Grace Hopkins, Temporary Clerk in Joe Fernald's absence

TOWN OF HUDSON, NH  
FISCAL YEAR 2019 BUDGET  
WARRANT ARTICLE STRAW POLL

	<b>Warrant Articles</b>	<b>Barnes</b>	<b>Hopkins</b>	<b>Levin</b>	<b>Morin</b>	<b>Martin</b>	<b>Pagan</b>	<b>Trost</b>
<b>A</b>	General Fund Operating Budget (includes Libr and Cons)	Y	Y	A	Y	Y	Y	Y
<b>B</b>	Sewer Fund Operating Budget	Y	Y	A	Y	Y	Y	Y
<b>C</b>	Water Fund Operating Budget	Y	Y	A	Y	Y	Y	Y
<b>D</b>	Wage and Benefit Increase for Town Clerk/Tax Collector	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y
<b>G</b>	Lowell Road CMAQ Project	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y
<b>H</b>	Hire Four (4) Firefighter/AEMT's	Y	Y	A	Y	Y	Y	Y
<b>I</b>	Funding for Fire Apparatus Refurb and Repair Capital Reserve Fund	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
<b>J</b>	Funding for Property Revaluation Capital Reserve Fund	Y	Y	A	Y	Y	Y	Y
<b>K</b>	Funding for Communications Equip and Infrastructure Capital Res Fund	Y	Y	A	Y	N	Y	Y
<b>L</b>	Hire Associate IT Specialist	A	Y	A	Y	Y	N	N
<b>M</b>	Establish Municipal and Transportation Improvement Capital Res Fund	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N	Y
<b>Q</b>	Wage and Benefit Increase for Library Personnel	A	A	N	Y	N	N	Y
<b>R</b>	Funding for Library Improvements Capital Reserve Fund	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N	Y
<b>S</b>	Town Clerk/Tax Collector Salary Step Scale	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
<b>T</b>	Benson Park Restroom Facilities	Y	A	N	Y	N	N	N

\* Fernald, Guessferd, Murray not in attendance.